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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT & TRADEMARK OFFICE

IN RE APPLICATION OF :  
YOSHIAKI MIYATA, ET AL : ATTN: APPLICATION DIVISION  
SERIAL NO: NEW APPLICATION :  
FILED: HERewith :

FOR: HYALURONIC ACID GEL, PROCESS FOR PRODUCING THE  
SAME AND MEDICAL MATERIAL CONTAINING THE SAME

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20231

SIR:

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-12 and add new Claims 13-16 as follows:

13. (New) A method of producing a hyaluronic acid gel which comprises adjusting a hyaluronic acid solution to a pH 3.5 or below, and freezing and thawing the solution at least once.

14. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the gel dissolves in a neutral aqueous solution at 37°C in 12 hours to a degree of dissolution of at most 50%.

15. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein the gel dissolves to yield solubilized hyaluronic acid having a molecular branched structure and partly containing a molecular



weight fraction with a branching degree of at least 0.5, when treated under accelerating conditions for acid hydrolysis of hyaluronic acid.

16. (New) The method of Claim 13, wherein the gel has not been subjected to chemical crosslinking by a chemical crosslinking compound or chemical modification by a chemical modifying compound and which is not in the form of a complex with a cationic polymer and (1) which dissolves in a neutral aqueous solution at 25°C in one day to a degree of dissolution of at most 50% or (2) which dissolves in a neutral aqueous solution at 37°C in 12 hours to a degree of dissolution of at most 50%, or both.

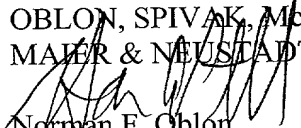
#### REMARKS

Claims 13-16 correspond to Claims 7 and 13-15, respectively, of the parent application, which were cancelled by Examiner's amendment therein.

The application is ripe for examination on the merits. An early examination is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Serial No:

NEW APPLICATION

Amendment Filed on:

HEREWITH

Claims 1-12 (cancelled)

Claims 13-16 (new)